

CONSUMER ALERT



Office of the Attorney General Robert E. Cooper, Jr.

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ATTORNEY GENERAL ASKS TENNESSEANS TO BE AWARE OF POTENTIAL PRICE GOUGERS IN WAKE OF HURRICANE IKE

As Hurricane Ike makes landfall on the Texas coast, Attorney General Bob Cooper is asking Tennesseans to be on the lookout for potential price gougers.

Some individuals may try to take advantage of potential victims of one of the nation's largest hurricanes by unreasonably raising the prices they charge for essential goods and services, including gasoline. This practice is called price gouging and is unlawful in Tennessee.

Gov. Bredesen has received a waiver from the Environmental Protection Agency to help ensure an adequate supply of gasoline is available in Tennessee. The governor requested the waiver on Sept. 5 to help minimize price increases and ensure an adequate supply of gasoline is available in the wake of Hurricane Gustav.

"The State has the ability under the Tennessee Consumer Protection Act and other laws to prosecute price gougers," Attorney General Cooper said. "Price gougers would include those who unreasonably raise the price of essential goods, commodities, or services in the wake of natural disasters occurring in other states even if a state of emergency has not been issued in Tennessee."

Mary Clement, the Director of the Division of Consumer Affairs, said consumers may call the State's consumer hotline at 1-800-342-8385 to report price gouging activities.

Consumers who believe they may have been charged an unreasonable price for a good, commodity or service should contact the Division of Consumer Affairs at 1-800-342-8385 (toll-free inside Tennessee) or (615) 741-4737.